

THEME Today we celebrate the great truth that Jesus believed we were worth dying for - in His eyes we are worth His life. There is no need to be afraid; we are of greater value than many sparrows.

PENITENTIAL RITE

- Forgive us, Lord, for the times we do not declare ourselves for you. Lord have mercy. **Lord have mercy.**
- You tell us not to be afraid, but quite often we are. Forgive us for the times our fear keeps us from you. Christ have mercy, **Christ have mercy.**
- Forgive us Lord, when we put the opinion of other people before your opinion and we disown you. Lord have mercy. **Lord have mercy.**

GLORIA

OPENING PRAYER - *Let us pray that we may grow in the love of God.*

Father, guide and protector of Your people, grant us an unfailing respect of Your name, and keep us always in Your love.

LITURGY OF THE WORD OF GOD

First Reading – Jeremiah 20 v. 10 - 13. The prophet Jeremiah reflects on the suffering and isolation his preaching has brought him. What helps him to persevere is his deep belief that the Lord is at his side.

**‘Jeremiah said: I hear so many disparaging me,
“Terror from every side!” Denounce him! Let us denounce him!’
All those who used to be my friends watched for my downfall: ‘Perhaps he will be seduced into error. Then we will master him and take our revenge!’**

But the Lord is at my side, a mighty hero; my opponents will stumble, mastered, confounded by their failure; everlasting, unforgettable disgrace will be theirs.

But you, O Lord of Hosts, you who probe with justice, who scrutinise the loins and heart, let me see the vengeance you will take on them, for I have committed my cause to you.

Sing to the Lord, praise the Lord, for he has delivered the soul of the needy from the hands of evil men.’

Responsorial Psalm - Psalm 68 ® **In Your great love, answer me, O God.**

It is for you that I suffer taunts, that shame covers my face,
that I have become a stranger to my brothers,
that I have become an alien to my own Mother’s sons,
I burn with zeal for your house and taunts against you fall on me ®

This is my prayer to you, my prayer for your favour.
In your great love, answer me, O God, with your help that never fails;
Lord, answer, for your love is kind; in your compassion, turn towards me. ®

The poor when they see it will be glad and God-seeking hearts will revive;
for the Lord listens to the needy and does not spurn his servants in their chains.
Let the heavens and the earth give Him praise,
the sea and all its living creatures. ® **In Your great love, answer me, O God.**

Second Reading - Romans 5 v. 12 - 15. Paul develops his understanding of how Jesus is the second Adam. The overwhelming grace of God’s act in the death and resurrection of Jesus has far outstripped the original offence of Adam.

‘Sin entered the world through one man, and through sin death, and thus death has spread through the whole human race because everyone has sinned. Sin existed in the world long before the Law was given. There was no law and so no one could be accused of the sin of ‘law-breaking’, yet death reigned over all from Adam to Moses, even though their sin, unlike that of Adam, was not a matter of breaking a law.

Adam prefigured the One to come, but the gift itself considerably outweighed the fall. If it is certain that through one man’s fall so many died, it is even more certain that divine grace, coming through the one man, Jesus Christ, came to so many as an abundant free gift.’

Alleluia, alleluia! The Word was made flesh and lived among us; to all who did accept Him He gave power to become children of God. Alleluia!

Gospel – Matthew 10 v. 26 -33. Christ exhorts his disciples to bear witness to the Gospel openly and fearlessly. He encourages us in the words ‘Do not be afraid’.

‘Jesus instructed the Twelve as follows: ‘Do not be afraid. For everything that is now covered will be uncovered, and everything now hidden will be made clear. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the daylight; what you hear in whispers, proclaim from the housetops.

‘Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; fear him rather who can destroy both body and soul in hell. Can you not buy two sparrows for a penny? And yet not one falls to the ground without your Father knowing. Why, every hair on your head has been counted. So there is no need to be afraid; you are worth more than hundreds of sparrows.

‘So if anyone declares himself for me in the presence of men, I will declare myself for him in the presence of my Father in heaven. But the one who disowns me in the presence of men, I will disown in the presence of my Father in heaven.’

CREED: Nicene Creed

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Celebrant: Let us pray to God, from whom comes everything that is good.

Reader: Let us pray that Christians may have the courage and conviction to proclaim the Gospel boldly, openly and uncompromisingly to all people, so that they can come closer to Christ.

We pray for all fathers, especially those who are bringing up their children alone, that their lives and actions reflect the love and generosity of our Heavenly Father.

Father, we pray that we may all be true to our vocation and fulfil whatever task you created for us.

Let us pray for all in positions of authority, that they may witness to Christ by the concern they show for others, especially the weak who cannot speak for themselves.

Let us pray for those who work with the terminally ill, that their compassion may help those who are afraid of death to achieve peace and serenity.

We pray for the bereaved, especially Tina Pipe, Maureen Tozer and their families.

We pray for all who are in pain and sickness - that they may find Christ alongside them in their suffering; for Nichola Berry, Ken Davis and Maria Everett recovering from operations and for Michael Denny, Janice Ross, Billy Carter, Jessica Mercer, Joan Hill, Elizabeth Routledge and Keith Forsdyke. May the Lord give them an increase in faith, hope and love.

Give rest to the faithful departed – and bring them to praise you in eternity. We remember especially Russell Pipe and Gordon Tozer, recently departed and Christopher Wilson, Elsie Smith, John Howard, Monica Kellner, Bill Donze, Jack Mason, Ada Clark, Kim Warren, Dorothy Allen, Edith Algy, May Hadley, Burleigh Payne, Ronald Hales, Leonard Phillips and Hazel Baker, whose anniversaries occur at this time.

May Our Lady, who stood beside the cross when others had run away, pray with us: **Hail Mary full of grace the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.**

S I L E N C E

All: Lord God, our Father, you give all good things. Give your people confidence to proclaim your living word to all mankind. We ask this through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

ACT OF SPIRITUAL HOLY COMMUNION

Dear Lord, since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, I ask you to come spiritually into my heart. Let nothing ever separate me from you.

ANGELUS

BLESSING ☩

Fr Philip Writes: Thought for this week

“Evangelism is one beggar telling another beggar where he found bread.”
(D T Niles)

Church open for private prayer

St Mary's church is open every day from 11.00 am to 4.00 pm for private prayer. You are welcome, but it is important that everyone maintains the strictest hygiene and distancing directions. **PLEASE:**

- do not enter if there are any Covid symptoms in your household;
- enter only through the North porch;
- keep 2 metres apart from anyone in another household;
- use hand sanitiser: stations are each side of the porch door;
- sit or kneel only where pews are marked with a sticker ○ (Blessed Sacrament chapel & South side of Nave);
- only 1 person in the Holy Cross Chapel at a time;
- do not cross any barriers; they are there to minimise risk;
- If you need to use the toilet, please clean it thoroughly afterwards.

Thank you to Richard & Chris for adjusting one votive candle stand and to Graham for mending and repainting two – a great improvement!

***Please note: Craftsmen from Bakers of Danbury will be carrying out repairs in the church and on some of the roofs this week.**

Mass Readings this week: 12th Week in Ordinary Time (Divine Office – Psalter Week 4)

MON: Ss JOHN FISHER & THOMAS More: 2Macc 6 v18,21,24-31; Matt 24v4-13.
Intention: Christian Unity.

TUE: 2Kings 19 v 9-11, 14-21, 31-36; Matt 7 v 6, 12-14. Int: Walsingham

WED: NATIVITY OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST: Is. 49 v 1-6; Acts 13 v 22-26; Luke 1 v 57-66,80. Intention: Protection of unborn children.

THUR: 2Kings 24 v 8-17; Matt 7 v 21-29. Int: Refugees

FRI: 2Kings 25 v 1-12; Matt 8 v 1-4 Int: The Leprosy Mission

SAT: St Cyril of Alexandria Lamentations 2 v 2,10-14,18-19; Matt 8 v 5-17.

Int: The healing ministry

Next Sun: Ss PETER & PAUL Acts 12 v 1-11; 2Tim 4 v 6-8; Matt 16 v 13-19.

Please continue to pray for one another, as I do for you – and continue to contact me about any pastoral need or prayer requests. Tel: 01449 766359